



*City of Winston-Salem*  
*North Carolina*  
27102

COUNCIL MEMBER  
EAST WARD

June 11, 2021

Mr. William Royston  
Recreation and Parks Director  
City of Winston-Salem  
PO Box 2511  
Winston-Salem, NC 27102

Dear Mr. Royston:

I would like to recommend to the Recreation and Parks Commission that the footbridge across Salem Creek that is located at the end of Liberia Street be named the Wade Bitting footbridge. It was in the 1930's that Mr. Bitting approached Salem Ward alderman J. Wilbur Crews about the need for a footbridge after a woman fell and broke her leg trying to get cross the creek from the Happy Hill neighborhood to Salem and downtown.

Mr. Bitting was an advocate for his community. Langdon E. Opperman wrote in her report, *Winston-Salem's African-American Neighborhoods: 1870-1950*, "The creek and all the low area was excessively overgrown and the neighborhood was frequently flooded. Residents had no screens in windows and so slept under the constant attack of mosquitoes and rats from the creek. Wade Bitting organized the men of his church and drew up a petition to have the undergrowth cleared and a playground made for children, which they presented to the mayor, R.J. Reynolds, Jr."

Also, Mr. Bitting was instrumental in having street names put up and numbers on the houses. This would lead to mail being delivered to the houses instead of residents having to walk to the Salem post office for their mail.

This tribute is a lasting testament to one man's efforts to improve the condition of his neighborhood. Though more than seventy years ago, Mr. Bitting's community engagement and social action is a shining example for others to follow.

Sincerely,

Annette Scippio  
East Ward, Council member